

LISTING OF CLAIMS

Claim 1-20 (canceled)

Claim 21 (amended): A system for inspecting a semiconductor wafer, comprising:

means for directing light energy toward the semiconductor wafer for said inspecting;

means for damping the semiconductor wafer, said damping means comprising at least one element mounted in relatively close proximity to said semiconductor wafer, said damping means and said semiconductor wafer being spaced apart by a gap free of components; and

means for receiving the reflected light energy from the semiconductor wafer, wherein said receiving means are employed for said inspecting.

Claim 22 (previously presented): The system of claim 21, further comprising:

a positioning arrangement to fixedly maintain the semiconductor wafer in a predetermined position; and

a repositioning arrangement for repositioning said positioning arrangement relative to the directing means.

Claim 23 (previously presented): The system of claim 22, wherein said receiving means receive light energy from said semiconductor wafer and provide a representation thereof, said system further comprising a stitching device to stitch multiple semiconductor wafer representations together.

Claim 24 (previously presented): The system of claim 21, said damping means comprising a damping bar, and said gap being approximately .10 to 1.0.

Claim 25 (previously presented): The system of claim 22, wherein said repositioning arrangement comprises translating means for translating said semiconductor wafer.

Claim 26 (previously presented): The system of claim 23, wherein said directing means direct light energy to a predetermined portion of said semiconductor wafer unobstructed by the damping means.

Claim 27 (previously presented): The system of claim 22, wherein the positioning arrangement comprises a three point kinematic mount, wherein all points of the three point kinematic mount are substantially tangentially oriented.

Claim 28 (previously presented): A method for inspecting both sides of a semiconductor wafer, comprising:

directing light energy toward each side of the semiconductor wafer;

damping the semiconductor wafer by mounting a substantially rigid element proximate the semiconductor wafer, thereby forming a gap between said substantially rigid element and said semiconductor wafer free of components; and

receiving light energy reflected from the semiconductor wafer.

Claim 29 (previously presented): The method of claim 28, wherein said light energy is directed by an illuminator, the method further comprising:

fixedly maintaining the semiconductor wafer in a predetermined position prior to said directing; and

repositioning said positioning arrangement relative to the illuminator after said receiving.

Claim 30 (previously presented): The method of claim 29, wherein said receiving comprises receiving light energy from said semiconductor wafer and providing a representation thereof, said method further comprises stitching multiple semiconductor wafer representations together.

Claim 31 (previously presented): The method of claim 28, wherein said substantially rigid element comprises a damping bar, and said gap is approximately .10 to 1.0 millimeters.

Claim 32 (previously presented): The method of claim 29, wherein said repositioning comprises translating said semiconductor wafer.

Claim 33 (previously presented): The method of claim 30, wherein said directing comprises directing light energy to a predetermined portion of said semiconductor wafer unobstructed by the substantially rigid element.

Claim 34 (previously presented): The method of claim 29, wherein the fixedly maintaining comprises holding the semiconductor wafer using a three point kinematic mount, wherein all points of the three point kinematic mount are substantially tangentially oriented.

Claim 35 (amended): A system for inspecting a semiconductor wafer, comprising:

a light emitter emitting light energy toward the semiconductor wafer;

a substantially rigid damping member positioned proximate the semiconductor wafer, thereby forming a gap free of components between the substantially rigid damping member and the semiconductor wafer; and

a detector for receiving light energy reflected from the semiconductor wafer,
wherein said detector is employed in said inspecting of said semiconductor wafer.

Claim 36 (previously presented): The system of claim 35, further comprising:

a positioning arrangement to fixedly maintain the semiconductor wafer in a predetermined position; and

a repositioning arrangement for repositioning said positioning arrangement relative to the light emitter.

Claim 37 (previously presented): The system of claim 36, wherein said detector receives light energy from said semiconductor wafer and provide a representation thereof, said system further comprising a stitching device to stitch multiple semiconductor wafer representations together.

Claim 38 (previously presented): The system of claim 35, said substantially rigid damping member comprising a damping bar, and said gap being approximately .10 to 1.0 millimeters.

Claim 39 (previously presented): The system of claim 36, wherein said repositioning arrangement comprises translating means for translating said semiconductor wafer.

Claim 40 (previously presented): The system of claim 37, wherein said light emitter directs light energy to a predetermined portion of said semiconductor wafer unobstructed by the substantially rigid damping member.

Claim 41 (previously presented): The system of claim 36, wherein the positioning arrangement comprises a three point kinematic mount, wherein all points of the three point kinematic mount are substantially tangentially oriented.